

2004 Report of Accomplishments

Thurston Conservation District



Natural Resource Improvements in 2004 - Summary

- We assisted landowners in the implementation of 366 Best Management Practices (BMPs). These practices resulted in improved soil fertility and improved water quality, particularly in the McAllister Creek area.
- We restored approximately 5 miles of in-stream habitat and planted nearly 126 acres of riparian buffer, benefiting wildlife (including salmon), and water quality.
- We installed 22,951 feet of riparian fence, keeping livestock out of water-bodies, thereby protecting water quality and important habitat for wildlife such as salmon and shellfish.



Mission of the Thurston Conservation District

- *To conserve, sustain, and protect our natural resources for the people of Thurston County through: rural and urban partnerships, fostering volunteerism, cooperation, education, leadership, and technical and financial assistance.*
-

Water Quality Implementation

- 40 landowners utilized our ground-driven manure spreader to implement nutrient management (590).
 - We provided 138 landowners with soil test analysis and proper nutrient application rates.
 - We conducted water quality testing on 3 streams to monitor/evaluate the effectiveness of BMPs.
-

Basic Funding

- The District hosted the Thurston County Envirothon academic competition for 16 teams of local high school students. We also sponsored the winning team at the State competition.
-

Local Funding

- Our WCC Crew provided 8,320 hours of work in the community restoring streambanks, installing fence, maintaining stormwater ponds, etc.
 - District staff provided over 2200 hours technical assistance and support to landowners whose property was not covered by a grant program.
 - Local funding enabled the District to secure numerous grants to benefit natural resource conservation in the County. Every dollar of assessment funds enabled the District to bring in 175% more funds through grants from Commission, DOE, Interagency Committee, and both the State and Federal Fish & Wildlife Services.
 - Over 40% of the South Sound GREEN program was funded. More than 1367 Thurston County teachers and students were educated. Water quality was monitored at 29 sites and macroinvertebrates were monitored on 12 sites on a total of 21 streams.
 - A countywide in-person and vote by mail election for District Supervisor was conducted.
-

Puget Sound/Water Quality

- We sold 35,801 native plants to 674 individuals during our 2004 annual plant sale.
-

Professional Engineering

- Our cluster engineer visited 2 sites in our County. Design work has begun for a dairy waste storage structure.
-

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- 21.4 acres of restored property was watered during the dry season and maintained to control competing vegetation.
 - Two new CRP signups.
 - 3 other sites were assessed for CREP.
-

Dairy

- One dairy installed a 150x108 dry waste storage structure, covered a 136 x 50 slab and reduce runoff, and installed 1,000 linear feet of gutters and downspouts. Another dairy installed just over 1500 feet of riparian fence.
- Two plan updates were completed and four dairies were certified.
- Three new dairies started business in Thurston County.
- 1,743 acres of Irrigation Water Management was implemented.

Salmon/Shellfish Restoration

- The District dedicated 28% of local funding directly to shellfish restoration in the shellfish protection districts.
- The District served as Lead Entity for WRIA 13. Four projects, totaling \$931,285 in Salmon Recovery Funding Board dollars. Projects included a land acquisition, fish passage barrier removals and a nearshore assessment.
- Nine conservation plans were developed for farms in the Nisqually & Henderson Shellfish Protection Districts.
- The District worked collaboratively with Thurston County Environmental Health to develop and implement a Shellfish District Watershed Pledge program. To date, we have 32 participating pledgers.

Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration

- Approximately 105 landowners were assisted with open space habitat assessment plans, wildlife management plans, planting plans, noxious weed removal and snag placement.
- 100 ft of shoreline along Lake Lois was replanted with native vegetation.

Small Farm Programs

- We assisted landowners with the development of 20 Conservation Plans.
- We provided follow up assistance to 109 landowners who have Conservation Plans.
- 1,916 acres of nutrient management, 1,532 acres of prescribed grazing and 2,357 acres of use exclusion was implemented on small farms.

Community Collaboration & Coordination

- The District participated in the Nisqually/Henderson Shellfish Stakeholder group consisting of 20 partners.
- South Sound GREEN and District education programs provided watershed education to 47 school classrooms.
- The District participated in the Environmental Education Technical Advisory Committee and continues to provide representation on the Natural Resources Youth Camp and the Envirothon Boards.
- The District coordinated with Thurston County Environmental Health on resolving issues on farms that violate the Non-Point Ordinance.
- The District participated in the Nisqually & Chehalis River Councils, South Sound Farm Bureau and Agricultural Committees, as well as the WRIA 11 salmon recovery funding process.
- The District participated on the EQIP Local Working Group Committee to develop ranking criteria and rated projects at the local level. Thurston County received funding for 5 projects, totaling \$1.4 million.

Information & Education

- We distributed 1,500 booklets & fact sheets to local residents. These documents offer guidance to residents on such subjects as planting, noxious weeds, managing manure, bats, birdhouses, composting, etc.
- We led 4 workshops and made 28 presentations, educating the public about pasture/manure management, shellfish, manure, water quality issues & solutions and services available through the District.
- We provided instructors at the Natural Resources Youth Camp, Millersylvania Outdoor School and led the regional Envirothon.
- We aired 10 different shows 24 times on public access television (TCTV), reaching 20,000 homes daily.
- We published 5 information articles in the Nisqually Valley News and The Daily Olympian. These ads reached approximately 150,000 homes in Thurston County and provided useful tips and information on such subjects as water quality, farm management, upcoming events and services we provide.

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

